



HP IPAQ HX4700

What's this? A navigation pad on a PDA?
Whatever next!



In brief

- Price £433
- Verdict 86%
- Operating System Windows Mobile 2003 for Pocket PC Second Edition
- Processor Intel PXA 270 624MHz
- Built-in RAM 135MB: 55MB RAM (64MB installed); 80MB ROM (128MB installed)
- More information www.hp.co.uk

Key features

- Lots of built-in memory
- SD and CF cards supported
- Both Wi-Fi and Bluetooth
- Touchpad and 4-inch VGA screen

Hewlett Packard is never one to stand still when it comes to PDA innovation. The company's most recently announced set of four handhelds includes the hx4700, which has enough innovations to make it stand out from the crowd.

Probably the first three things that hit right out of the box are the hardware design, crystal clear, large, high-resolution screen and the absence of any application shortcut buttons. On the hardware front Hewlett Packard leaves silver behind for grey, and the effect is stylish, making for a PDA that stands out from the crowd. Adding to this effect is a tough plastic screen cover, which can be removed if you prefer to use a hard case. The screen takes pride of place on the front of the casing. It is large at 4 diagonal inches, and its 640 x 480 pixels shine out. It's a joy to use.

The navigation pad is an interesting idea. There actually are application shortcut buttons, despite their apparent absence at first glance. They are missed because they are tiny. They sit at the corners of the navigation pad, and can be prodded with a finger or stylus. The pad itself is easiest to use with fingers – don't even consider

trying it with the stylus as this is very fiddly. Four minuscule raised buttons show where to prod the pad to move up, down, left and right, while a prod in the pad's centre acts as 'select'. We aren't convinced the arrangement works – often tapping at the screen is a faster way to get around in applications. If you prefer you can use the navigation pad to manipulate a tiny cursor on screen, moving it around as you would using a laptop. This feels a bit heavy-handed for the touch-screened PDA.

The processor is Intel's finest, a PXA 270 running at 624MHz. There's plenty of memory on board comprising 55MB of available RAM and a further 80MB of flash ROM. Hewlett Packard includes slots for both Compact Flash and SD cards, something Fujitsu Siemens has also managed in its VGA PDA the Pocket LOOX 720, which we will review in the next issue. We're glad to see dual expansion returning, and the two slots are snug as bugs in a rug in the top of the casing.

There's dual wireless, so both Bluetooth and Wi-Fi users are catered for, and Hewlett Packard provides a software utility to control both from the same interface, popping a quick access

icon on the Today screen. Here you'll also find another software extra, the Today Panel Lite. This comprises a few icons that sit under the upcoming appointments list, and provide info on memory and battery status as well as quick access to the backlight controls.

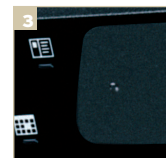
When it comes to software HP has gone somewhat to town. There is a Phone Manager for a reasonable range of Bluetooth phones, and Personal Dockware, which provides a day/date/picture screensaver, which is especially handy for PDAs that spend a lot of time in desktop cradles.

You also get Pocket Informant version 5. This is a versatile alternative to the diary and contact managers that are part of Windows Mobile, and one of the best selling in its genre.

Hewlett Packard has gone for broke with the hx4700. Its top-notch processor and oodles of memory complement the fantastic screen very nicely. We aren't sure about the navigation pad, and there's no camera built into this PDA, so it is out of the running if you really need a camera, but it does offer plenty of power and a good, long list of features. The price will put some people off, but overall this is a impressive Pocket PC. ■

Battery life

- Manufacturer's claimed life: Not specified
- Test results: We did our usual MP3 looping test with wireless turned off and the backlight always on. We got music for six hours and 4 minutes, and when playback stopped the battery gave out



There are no shortcut buttons, but instead a navigation pad with tiny buttons for prodding at



This device uses a simple LED system to show a wireless method is active

Actual size

- Dimensions ■ Measuring 131 x 77 x 14.9mm the iPAQ hx4700 is on the large side for a Pocket PC
- Weight ■ With the weight at 186.7g it's under 200g but not by a great deal – you will notice this one in the pocket

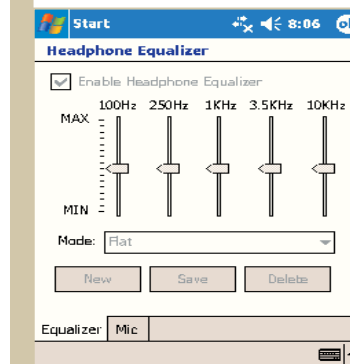


essentialsoftware

What's in the box? Here are some of the software highlights...

Headphone Equaliser

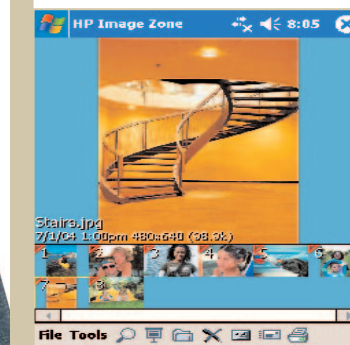
What is it: Equaliser for sound output



Use it for: Getting your music just how you like it

HP Image Zone

What is it: Image viewer



Use it for: Sort, select, share, annotate and view images singly or in slideshows

essentialspecs

Dimensions	131 x 77 x 14.9mm
Weight	186.7g
Processor	Intel PXA 270 624MHz
Installed RAM	135MB (total memory)
Operating System	WM2003 PPC SE
Display size	4.0 diagonal inches
Display resolution	640 x 480 pixels
Expansion slot	1 x SD/SDIO/MMC, 1 x CF

essentialverdict

Performance 9/10

■ This model has a super fast processor and good battery life

Design 9/10

■ Somewhat large in size, but that 4-inch screen needs to be accommodated

Build quality 9/10

■ A solid design, and comes with a tough screen cover

Supplied software 9/10

■ The supplied bundle is comprehensive and useful

Value for money 7/10

■ This is an expensive choice from a big brand name

TOTAL 86%

■ The good ROM-based software library and large screen help raise the score, but the navigation button and high price pull it back

"The HX4700's top-notch processor and oodles of memory

complement the fantastic screen nicely"

Also consider

- Fujitsu Siemens Pocket LOOX 720** £325
 - Windows Mobile 2003 for Pocket PC Second Edition
 - 123MB RAM (128MB installed)
 - 28MB Flash ROM (64MB)
 - VGA screen with Bluetooth and Wi-Fi, CF and SD expansion
 - Not yet reviewed
- O2 XDA II** £349
 - Pocket PC Phone Edition 2003
 - 128MB
 - Loads of memory and support for your SIM card in this Pocket PC
 - Reviewed Issue 18



Watch video clips in landscape mode for a better view



The back of the device is home to a large, replaceable Lithium-Ion battery pack



essentialaccessories



SD cards
Price: £50 for 256MB
Use it for: Extra storage
Get it from: www.widget.co.uk



Stowaway Bluetooth keyboard
Price: £99
Use it for: typing, typing, typing
Get it from: www.widget.co.uk